

Course Name: AP Psychology

Duration: 1 Semester Full Year

Grade Level: 9th 10th 11th 12th

Are there any prerequisites for the course?

Just an interest in learning about psychology!

WHAT this course is about:

Psychology is the study of

(1) our mental processes: How do we think? How does our memory work? How do we learn? How do we change over time? How can we more effectively use our mental abilities?

(2) our behavior: What makes us do the things we do? What motivates us? How do we change our behavior? How do we interact with others?

(3) our biology: What do the parts of the brain do? How do we sense and perceive the world? What do neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin do? What influences our moods & emotions?

WHY take this course:

We will learn about ourselves and others, gaining insight into why we think and act the way we do. Everything we learn can be applied to YOU! The second you walk out the classroom door you'll be able to apply your learning to the world around you. Taking the AP exam can also earn you college credit, allowing you to save time and money and giving you more flexibility with your university schedule.

WHAT you'll learn:

Social Psychology: how does our environment influence our behavior? How can we better understand our interactions with others?

Cognition: what does our thinking look like? How does our memory work? How can we more effectively use our cognitive abilities?

Research Methods: how do we discover new things in psychology? How do we better understand research which is presented to us?

Biopsychology and Neuroscience: how do our brain and nervous system affect our behavior?

Sensation and Perception: how does our brain make sense of the world through our five senses?

States of Consciousness: what are different states our brains can enter? Sleep? Hypnosis?

Learning: how do we change our behavior? How do we learn new ideas and behaviors. How can we help others to do so?

Emotion and Motivation: what are emotions, how are they made, and how do they guide our behavior? Why can stress be helpful? How can we better manage our emotions?

Developmental Psychology: what kind of predictable changes do we go through over our lifetimes? From infancy to old age, what are commonalities in the way we develop and age?

Personality: although we change throughout our lives, is there a part of us that doesn't change? What does change and why?

Testing and Individual Differences: what does intelligence look like? Is there more than one "intelligence"?

Psychological Disorders: what do our mental difficulties look like? How can we better understand those difficulties in ourselves and others?

Treatments and Therapies: how do we treat those mental difficulties? What specialists are best for different circumstances? What therapies are best depending on the circumstances?

WHAT you'll do:

- Surveys that tell you about yourself and others (for instance, you will find out if you are a sensation seeker, and what your mom and/or dad's parenting style is, among many other things)
- Watch many short video clips that illustrate our concepts (for instance, what do brainwaves look like during a grand mal seizure, and what does it look like when narcoleptics randomly fall asleep, among many others)
- End-of-unit tests to make sure you retained the content. These mirror the format of the AP exam so they are also good practice for the end of the year.
- Apply some of the wellness concepts we learn about in psychology, including mindfulness meditation and gratitude journals.
- Information is delivered via PowerPoint presentations in class. You will be provided with guided notes to help you follow along. This is complemented with our textbook readings; between these and the notes in class, you will have the opportunity to retain your understanding of the material.

WHERE this could take you:

- At the end of the year, you will know much more about what makes you think and behave the way you do.
- You will have new skills for interacting with others, succeeding in school, and enhancing your own health and well-being.
- You will have a great head start on university psychology classes. We cover basically everything that is covered in a Psychology 101 class in college. If you are interested in psychology at the university level and you pass the AP exam, you will be able to enter a higher-level psychology course after high school.
- You will know if a career in psychology is right for you. Many of our students have gone on to majors and careers in counseling, clinical psychology, and neuroscience. It might be the right path for you!

OPTIONAL Course Outline ("scope and sequence", sequence chart, etc.)

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